

Members

Rep. James Buck, Chairperson
Rep. Thomas Saunders
Rep. Jeb Bardon
Rep. Dan Stevenson
Sen. James Merritt
Sen. Brent Waltz
Sen. Richard Young
Sen. James Lewis



STATE HOUSE MUSEUM COMMITTEE

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 27, 2005
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St.,
Room 130
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Rep. James Buck, Chairperson; Rep. Thomas Saunders; Rep. Jeb Bardon; Rep. Dan Stevenson; Sen. James Merritt; Sen. Brent Waltz; Sen. Richard Young; Sen. James Lewis.

Members Absent: None.

Representative Buck, Chairman, called the second meeting of the State House Museum Committee to order at 10:00 AM. The Chairman presented the agenda for the meeting.

The Committee toured the upper floors of the State House and then returned to the Committee room for testimony and discussion. The tour lasted about 20 minutes.

Immediately at the conclusion of the tour, Chairman Buck said that there is a constant struggle for space in the upper floors of the State House that will continue unless space becomes available in other state office buildings. He concluded that the Judiciary takes up a large amount of space in the State House.

The Chairman re-capped some points from the first meeting, including that the intent of the study is not to vacate the media from the State House. He also said he did not want to make the public walk all over the downtown area to gain historical information on the State House.

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The Chairman opened the floor for public testimony.

Dr. Sonne Palmer, Professor of Architecture, Ball State University-

Dr. Palmer described the progress of the student study. He said ten fifth-year students are currently developing a plan to accommodate a museum and gift shop in the State House. The students, according to Dr. Palmer, have toured the State House twice. He said the students also have looked at other State Houses via available literature, have talked to the media group, and have mined other information.

Dr. Palmer believed the students now have enough information to develop a solution. He said that it is likely there will be two or possibly three alternative solutions presented. He stated that in two weeks he would have a better idea of the students progress.

Dr. Palmer stated that the student tours also included two members from the energy center, with whom discussions have occurred about the mechanical aspects of the first floor. He said that the unseen mechanics (wiring, piping, and bearing walls) are the most difficult issues for the students to design a solution.

Bonnie Coghlan, Associate State Architect, Department of Administration-

Ms. Coghlan testified that lofts placed in several offices within the State House do give more square footage to tenants. However, they are not the most ideal space saver. She stated that offices that have not added lofts may have wanted to maintain the architectural integrity of their office space.

One of the problems with lofts that Ms. Coghlan described is that they contribute to overcrowding of the State House. She said that too many people in the building present safety problems because there are not enough readily accessible nor clearly marked exits.

Ms. Coghlan made reference to the State House master plan recommending the lofts be removed after the Judiciary and Attorney General are moved to the proposed State Judicial Building.

Ms. Coghlan elaborated that the proposed judicial center would provide underground parking and a media center with all standard amenities of the profession, such as internet access, phones, and other items. She stated that the master plan had conceptual drawings, but that it is mainly a data study gathered by interviews.

Ms. Coghlan continued that all buildings on the state campus have been evaluated for safety and survivability. She said that based on the findings, the State House is not a very secure building, but stated that the State House should be accessible as the people's house.

Ms. Coghlan said the State House is currently in the first stages of a complete HVAC replacement for the entire building, with completion slated for 2009. She said one of the reasons for the HVAC replacement is that the building, particularly the first floor, does not currently meet code on the availability of fresh air. She said the first floor has many storage closets that have no fresh air circulation. She said assembly-level groups of people are required to have seven square feet of air per person and that the first floor does not currently meet that requirement. She said the lack of available fresh air would prevent large groups from touring a first-floor museum facility.

Following Ms. Coghlan's testimony, the Chairman asked Committee members and staff to introduce themselves. Chairman Buck also mentioned that another committee is currently studying the State House. He said that the study dovetails into the State House Museum Committee because the other committee is looking at first-floor usage from a security standpoint.

Stephen Key, Hoosier State Press Association-

Mr. Key presented the following concerns regarding a possible move of the media from their first-floor offices:

-Technology: Mr. Key said the communication cables, including microwave dish connections, would involve expense to move.

-Security and Privacy: Mr. Key said that the current location of the State House media affords a bit more privacy for media members to shield stories from competition. He said there are concerns that privacy would be compromised if all press members were placed in the same room.

-Proximity: Mr. Key offered that every bit of distance added to the media offices from the State House detracts from a reporter's time to meet deadlines. He stated that even a few minutes can be crucial in meeting an 11 PM or 12 AM deadline.

Mr. Key said that currently 14 entities occupy the first-floor press offices, including 3 television, 3 radio, 5 newspaper, and 2 other press entities.

He said use of the whole building as the museum would encourage people to see the entire building instead of the first floor only. There would be less expense in setting up displays in open areas than carving through the electrical and piping of the first floor.

Corwin Foote, Indiana Office of Technology-

Mr. Foote testified that Room 137 stores the main distribution frame for all data, voice, and video for the State House. Mr. Foote said it would be very costly to move the frame to another location, but did not provide any cost estimates.

He said that disruption of service would affect all State House employees and employees located in One North Capital, 101 W. Ohio, Harrison building, and the ISTA building. He said that the Governor's office would have to be completely re-cabled if the IOT were required to move from Room 137.

Mr. Foote summarized that the IOT could move from the Room 137 facility, but he would not be able to save all wiring and cables.

Jennifer Hodge, Department of Administration-

Ms. Hodge testified that open areas such as the atriums and rotunda are needed for tours when the Legislature is in session because, often, tours are not able to enter the House and Senate Chambers. She said that there have been discussions with the Indiana State Museum (ISM) to place traveling displays in an open area. However, the ISM has generally declined due

to security concerns.

Dave Remondini, Counsel to Chief Justice Shepard-

Mr. Remondini stated that the Supreme Court would work with the Committee to find a workable solution on their storage area on the first floor. He mentioned that currently the Court has been undergoing an inventory project to evaluate static and active storage in their room. He said they would try to have the inventory evaluation completed by the next meeting of the Committee.

Mr. Remondini described the types of items stored and said that 70%-80% of items are books. He said the plan is to determine if the Supreme Court has items that are available elsewhere and could be thrown out. He completed his testimony saying that the only double-deck room in the Judicial rooms of the State House is the law library.

The Chairman also took comments and suggestions from Committee members.

Representative Saunders said that he had read the master plans for a judicial center and said it would require the state to be in better financial shape before a judicial center could be built. He said hopefully the Committee could find space for a gift shop that does not further jeopardize the historical integrity of the building.

Representative Saunders further commented that the Committee should look into the possible use of Auditor's Office space by the west exit of the first floor, although he believed only minimal funding would likely be available for the gift shop.

Representative Saunders concluded that he liked the idea of a museum on all floors. He said the State House has real security concerns. However, he would like to see the State House remain accessible to visitors.

Senator Merritt outlined that he would like to see the creation of a State House Commission to keep track of the bust/statue inventory and monitor decay and other upkeep of the building. He suggested the creation of a State House website and mentioned the Illinois State House website as an example. He said that as things stand currently, it is difficult to pull together all aspects of the maintenance of the building.

Senator Merritt also said that the state has invested \$250,000 in Civil War Flag restoration. However, the flags sit in environment-controlled boxes in the War Memorial building. He said that out of 80 flags in care, 12 have been restored and should be displayed.

Senator Merritt also outlined that the state needs to do more to make the State House a better learning environment for 4th graders and to make the learning experience fun. He continued that the State House needs a gift shop. He advocated use of all floors of the State House as the museum. He said that even with increased security, the State House must be accessible to the public.

Senator Merritt concluded that the issue is simply bigger than for a single interim committee to study.

Representative Bardon said that it could be possible that several items in downstairs storage areas could be archived.

Senator Merritt responded that many agencies keep their documents in their storage because the archive facilities are not in good condition. He stated that a few years ago a tornado went through the area where the archives are located. Had the tornado struck the archive building, then all state artifacts would be in Ohio today.

The Chairman stated he would like to hear from the Auditor's Office on their storage area. He also asked the Committee and the public in attendance for thoughts for the next meeting on the type of items for the gift shop. He said the space needed for the shop could depend on the items offered.

The Chairman also stated that he may ask for a deadline extension on the final report for the Committee in order to accommodate the Ball State study.

Dr. Palmer said his students would likely need until November 25th to complete the study.

With no further comments offered, the next meeting date was set for October 18, 2005, at 10:00 AM.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:35 AM.